



## News from The Moors at Arne



### January 2025 update

Happy New Year! We hope that you have had a great start to 2025.

It's a relatively brief update this month. At this time of year, there is no actual construction activity on site but a small team are braving the elements to keep things in order ready for works to start again on 1 April.

### Site update

Vegetation maintenance continues this month under the watchful eye of our ecologists. It is important that vegetation is kept cut back in areas where we will be carrying out works later this year and this activity is part of our permitted winter works.



## Roman pottery production at Arne on Digging for Britain



You heard that right, the Arne Moors project features in the latest series of the ever-popular BBC archaeology programme!

Last summer, Digging for Britain's film crew spent a day at The Moors at Arne scheme with the team from Wessex Archaeology and colleagues from the Environment Agency and Kier.

During the summer, archaeologists discovered over 17,000 pottery fragments, two kilns and the remains of buildings in the northeastern corner of site. These exciting finds date back to the Romano-British period when a specific type of pottery called Black Burnished ware was being made around Poole Harbour on a huge scale.

A variety of jars, bowls and dishes were all made at Arne Moors in large numbers feeding a popular demand for Black Burnished ware which was widely traded across the whole of Roman Britain.



Credit: Wessex Archaeology

Following the discoveries on site, Professor Stuart Prior from Digging for Britain joined experts from Wessex Archaeology and Dorset potter, Bill Crumbleholme at the Ancient Technology Centre in Dorset to build a kiln inspired by those found on site and make Black Burnished ware-like pots to try and find out more about the firing process used to create the distinct black finish.

Phil Trim, Fieldwork Supervisor from Wessex Archaeology said:

*We're gaining fantastic insight into the inner workings of a Roman pottery production site, operating on a significant scale on The Moors at Arne. From the sheer number and variety of the fragments we've uncovered and the kilns themselves we're able to start understanding the processes and the challenges they might have faced achieving that specific Black Burnished ware finish.*

Greg Chuter, Environment Agency Archaeologist added:

*"This pottery was incredibly popular with the Roman Army and eventually made its way into everyday use and we are looking forward to exploring this site's role in supplying Roman Britain. As we know from recent experimental archaeology work with the Digging for Britain team, it is a very technical process that highlights the level of skill and control of fire the potters must have had."*

The episode aired at 8pm on 16<sup>th</sup> January on BBC Two and is available on BBC iPlayer now.



## Ecology

The ecology team are carrying out regular surveys of over wintering birds on site. Over winter, birds need to spend most of the day foraging for food and unnecessary movements can be detrimental to them, especially during cold spells.



Shorebirds at Arne and the Poole Harbour area in general tend to spend their time on intertidal mudflats searching for food. During high tide, when the intertidal flats are submerged, the birds move to high tide roost sites for refuge.

It's really important that birds are not disturbed during this time so the ecologists on site are carefully monitoring known roost sites over the winter and sharing updates with the site team so that works can be adapted as needed to avoid disturbance.

The ecology team are also carrying out some tree surveys ahead of some upcoming works.



## Coming soon

The site team will carry out some tree works over the next month in preparation for the construction of the eastern embankment later in the spring.

Once temperatures start to rise we will start to implement water vole relocation again, ensuring that this very special protected species is safeguarded during the next phase of construction.



## About the project

The Moors at Arne project is adapting over 150 hectares of land into a diverse wetlands habitat. This type of habitat is being lost in other areas of Poole Harbour due to 'coastal squeeze'. This is a term used to describe the effect of rising sea levels pressing against man-made structures such as flood defences resulting in a loss of intertidal habitat such as mud-flats and salt marsh.

Kier is the contractor delivering this project on behalf of the Environment Agency and its project partners, RSPB and Natural England.

Got a question for the project team? Contact us via [arne@kier.co.uk](mailto:arne@kier.co.uk)

